

Social Work Practice Changes Due to Licensure

Effective July 1, 2005, the provisions of P.A. 61 of 2004 went into effect which changed the regulation of social work from registration to licensure. This has caused significant changes to the regulation of the social work profession.

Title Changes:

Registered Social Work Technician became Registered Social Service Technician

Registered Social Worker became Licensed Bachelor's Social Worker

Certified Social Worker became Licensed Master's Social Worker

Regulatory Changes:

The social service technician continues to be a registration. If an individual is registered, only he or she can say they are a social service technician. An individual who is not registered can do similar work but they cannot be called a social service technician.

The bachelor's and master's social worker are now licensed. This means that only the individuals who are licensed can be called social workers and that the tasks defined by the Public Health Code as social work have to be done by licensed social workers.

New administrative rules have been developed to address the new provisions of the law. They are available at the following link: [Health Professions Administrative Rules](#).

Scope Changes:

To provide better distinction between the experienced practitioner and the "new" practitioner, a limited license was created at each level of practice. This limited license allows the individual licensee to practice the activities/functions of the full registrant/licensee while under the supervision of the full licensee. For example, an individual who has completed their bachelor degree in social work would like to have a chance to practice what they have learned but they need to have guidance in their early stages. The limited bachelor's license provides them with the opportunity to perform bachelor social worker tasks while under the guidance and supervision of a master's social worker. At the completion of 2 years (4,000 hours) of supervised practice, the individual is ready to be a licensed bachelor's social worker.

Additionally, the legislation provided for a distinction between the master's social worker who is mainly doing private practice activities and one-on-one counseling and the master's social worker who is focusing on macro activities such as running a community agency. The master's social worker license will now be designated in either clinical practice or macro practice. (People who currently hold the certified social worker registration will be issued a license as a master's social worker in both fields.) The initial license will be issued for only one area of practice but the second area can be acquired with the completion of experience under a master's social worker in that area of practice.

All Previous Registrations were Transferred to the Equivalent New Classification:

Social Work Technician Registration became Social Service Technician Registration

Social Worker Registration became Bachelor's Social Worker License

Certified Social Worker Registration became Master's Social Worker License with Macro or Clinical or both designations

All registered master's social workers were given both the macro and clinical designations on their licenses. They are expected to practice only in their area of expertise – macro social workers should not be practicing clinical social work and clinical social workers should not be practicing macro social work unless they have the appropriate training. Frequently it is difficult to separate the functions so it will be possible to hold both designations.

Those who have let their registrations lapse will be reviewed on a case by case basis until January 2008 to determine their qualifications. The administrative rules provide for the submission of 45 continuing education credits with the application for relicensure. The programs that can be used for continuing education are described in the continuing education section of the rules.

The Renewal Cycle in April 2006 was the Beginning of the Following Changes:

The licenses/registrations are now valid for 3 years.

BSW and MSW licensees who renewed in 2006 will have to complete 45 hours of board approved continuing education activities in the 2006 – 2009 licensing cycle.

There are no continuing education requirements for the social service technician.

Basic information regarding acceptable continuing education is listed in the administrative rules; a brochure explaining the requirements is also listed at www.michigan.gov/healthlicense under Social Worker and more information regarding approved continuing education programs can be located at www.socialworkcec.com.

Experience Earned in a Limited Registration/License Status:

The addition of a limited registration or license at each level of regulation allows qualified individuals to gain the required experience after meeting the educational requirements while in an appropriate supervisory situation. Starting September 2005, experience for the social service technician and either the bachelor's or master's social worker must be earned while in a limited status. Limited license social workers will be able to take the examination required for full licensure while they are earning their experience.

NOTE: As of July 2006, the initial applicant for the master's social worker license in macro practice is required to have to verify their experience, education and complete the ASWB's Advanced Generalist examination.

Applicants for the master's social worker in clinical practice will have to verify their experience, education and complete the ASWB's Clinical examination.

BSW applicants will have to complete the requirements of education, experience and pass the ASWB Bachelor's examination.

Enrollment in a master's degree social work program is no longer an acceptable way to earn a bachelor's social worker license. Applicants will have to verify completion of a bachelor's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program.

Since July 1, 2005 all BSW and MSW applicants are required to have a degree in social work. Other degrees will no longer be acceptable. [If the original registration was issued on the basis of some other degree, we will not take the license away. The degree requirement only applies to new applicants.]

Supervision Requirements for Limited Registrations/Licenses

Limited Social Service Technician Registration

- No more than 2,000 hours in 1 year
- Limited license issued for one year and can renew only once
- Supervisory review required at least 4 hours per month
- Supervision by licensed bachelor's or master's social worker

Limited Bachelor's Social Worker License

- 4,000 hours at no more than 2,000 hours per year after degree completed
- Limited license issued for 1 year and renewed for not more than 6 years
- Supervision by master's social worker
- Work for no more than 40 hours per week
- Supervisory review required of at least 4 hours per month in group or individual settings but at least 1 hour must be an individualized review

Limited Master's Social Worker License

- 4,000 hours at no more than 2,000 hours per year after degree completed
- Limited license issued for 1 year and renewed for not more than 6 years
- Supervision by master's social worker – same designation as limited – e.g. macro supervisor for macro experience and clinical supervisor for clinical experience
- Work for no more than 40 hours per week
- Supervisory review required of at least 4 hours per month in group or individual settings but at least 1 hour must be in individualized review
- 50% of the supervision should include individual contact during which active functions and records of limited licensee are reviewed

Alternate Supervision Arrangement Requirements for Bachelor's and Master's Level:

In cases of extreme hardship where an approved supervisor is not available, supervision by a related healthcare practitioner can be requested. Before the alternate supervisor can be used, the limited licensee must submit a request with a proposed plan and documentation of the willingness of the alternate supervisor. The Board shall review the request and approve/disapprove the alternate supervisor.

Documentation of Supervised Experience:

Experience for the Social Service Technician can only be verified by completion of the Michigan experience form.

Experience for the Bachelor's or Master's Social Worker can be verified in one of the following ways:

1. Completion of Michigan experience form
2. Licensure from other state if that state had 4,000 hours of similar supervised experience required
3. Verified ACSW status (QCSW is not acceptable because it requires only 3,000 hours of post degree experience)
4. If supervisor no longer available, verification of experience from agency director or program director who would be familiar with abilities is an acceptable alternative